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RE: 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Public Comments

The [International Food Information Council \(IFIC\)](#) and [IFIC Foundation](#) appreciate the opportunity to submit comments to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC). Our ensuing comments are constructed with the 2010 DGAC "Needs for Future Research" in mind. We believe our years of consumer research and related peer-reviewed articles will be of great value to the DGAC in supporting innovative ways to motivate the American public toward more healthful lifestyles and behaviors.

IFIC and IFIC Foundation are nonprofit organizations based in Washington, DC. The mission of IFIC is to effectively communicate science-based information about food safety and nutrition to health professionals, government officials, educators, journalists, and consumers. The mission of the IFIC Foundation is to effectively communicate science-based information about health, nutrition and food safety for the public good. Both IFIC and the IFIC Foundation receive primary funding from food, beverage and agricultural companies that support our missions. We also receive government grants and contributions from other individuals, foundations and associations.

IFIC and IFIC Foundation consumer research has been exploring Americans' attitudes toward nutrition and health for more than two decades with our signature research project being the annual IFIC Foundation *Food & Health Survey*. We are dedicated to providing consumers with clear, accurate advice and actionable tips on how science-based information related to nutrition, health, and food safety can be applied to their daily lives.

FOOD SAFETY

RESEARCH NEED ADDRESSED:

The 2010 DGAC identified the following research needs related to food safety:

1. Conduct consumer risk communication research to determine how best to translate findings to the public.

2. Improve the validity of self-reported food safety behaviors, understanding how to improve consumers' food safety knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, internal locus of control and ultimately behaviors, further developing and promoting contemporary educational resources for encouraging food safety behaviors in the home.
3. Understand how to improve consumers' food safety knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, and behaviors.

RELEVANCE:

There are gaps in knowledge and implementation of food safety behaviors that can be addressed, according to IFIC Foundation research, by food safety educators by allowing them to put their information into a more compelling context. IFIC Foundation research further reinforces that although some consumers are cognizant of food safety and food safety practices, there is room for additional consumer education and communications.

FOR NUTRITION EVIDENCE LIBRARY (NEL) CONSIDERATION:

Cody MM, Gravani R, Smith Edge M, Doohar C, White C. [*International Food Information Council Foundation Food and Health Survey, 2006–2010, Food Safety: A Web-enabled Survey*](#). *Food Protection Trends*. 2012;6 (32):309-326.

Description: This IFIC Foundation consumer research examines what is perceived as the most important food safety issues, use of product labels, sources of food safety information, and reported food safety practices.

KEY POINTS ADDRESSING RESEARCH NEEDS #1 AND #3:

- The most frequently cited sources of food safety information that respondents reported using in the six months prior to completing the survey were television news programs, internet articles, newspapers, and friends/family, and the most trusted sources of food safety information were government agencies/officials, health professionals, health associations, and television news programs.
- The least trusted sources of food safety information were blogs or social networking sites.
- Respondents were more apt to make changes in their food safety behaviors when advised by physicians and other health professionals.

KEY POINTS FROM IFIC FOUNDATION 2013 *FOOD AND HEALTH SURVEY*:

- The safety of foods and beverages is on the minds of four out of ten Americans a lot. And, although the large majority of Americans remain confident in the safety of the U.S. food supply, confidence dropped between 2012 and 2013.
- Only one out of seven Americans believe it is possible to have complete control over the safety of their foods and beverages, but one in five report making the strongest effort to control it.
- Americans commonly take a variety of actions to achieve food safety. The *Food & Health Survey* shows a 5 year increase in consumer safe food handling practices such as washing hands with soap and water (clean); using different or freshly –cleaned cutting boards for each product (separate); cooking to required temperatures (cook); and properly storing leftovers within 2 hours of serving (chill).